arrests of Pakistani nationals in cases relating to circulation of fake currency in Nepal, which are being investigated by the concerned authorities in HMGN. Government of India have no evidence to establish that the fake currency notes were printed in some European countries.

FBI's Office in India

†2977. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL :

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA :

SHRI J. CHITHANJAN :

SHRI GAYA SINGH :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have permitted Federal Bureau of Investigation of America to set up its office in India for working independently;

(b) if so, when it was permitted and by when the office of the said institution is likely to be set up; and

(c) what are the reasons for which Government have permitted this American intelligence agency to work in India ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) ; (a) It has been decided by mutual consultations to allow the US Embassy in New Delhi to augment its strength for opening a Legal Attache Office. Such offices are normally manned by two FBI Officers. Government of India has similar representation in its Embassy in Washington. There is however no proposal for setting up an independent office of the FBI in India.

(b) The decision was taken in February 2000 and the US Government is in the process of implementing it shortly.

(c) The decision was taken in the context of growing Indo-US bilateral co-operation on counter-terrorism. While necessary mechanism to counter terrorism is already in place with the Extradition Treaty and the Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism, the opening of the Legal Attache Office will enable more effective co-ordination between our law enforcement agencies. It will also singal greater commonality of interests between the two countries in the fight against terrorism. This will in turn exert pressure on extremist groups operating across borders.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.